

**Remarks of Michelle Lorince
Spanish Teacher
East Lyme Public Schools**

**Before the Education Committee
On S.B. No. 24, AN ACT CONCERNING EDUCATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS
Sections 28 and 29, Teacher Certification and Teacher Tenure**

February 21, 2012

Senator Stillman and Representative Fleischmann, and members of the Education Committee: My name is Michelle Lorince, and I'm a Spanish teacher in East Lyme. I'm writing to comment on Senate Bill 24, Sections 28 and 29.

As a Spanish teacher in the State of Connecticut for the past 12 years, I have much to say about sections 28 & 29 on Senate Bill 24. I find it offensive & disrespectful to state that teachers just "show up." I have gone through many hoops to become a teacher. First, I attended Connecticut College where I received my Master of Arts in Teaching Hispanic Studies with a cumulative average of a 3.7. Upon graduation, I took the Praxis Exam in my discipline. Not only did I put forth my best efforts in each course, but I also paid an exorbitant amount of money to get my Master's Degree, and then later to take the Praxis exam & obtain subsequent certifications. I began to teach at Kelly Middle School in Norwich and was initiated into the BEST Program. I met with a BEST Teacher in the school, planned activities & conferenced about their implementation and success in the classroom. As my second year in the Best Program approached, I was hired in the East Lyme School District where I also attended as a high school student. During my first year at ELHS and in my second year in the Best Program, I began the portfolio portion of the Best Program. Once I passed the Best Program I received my Initial certification. After the required number of years of teaching, including supervision and observations by the school administration, I was then able to obtain my Provisional and then subsequent Professional Certifications. I find it offensive that the Governor of Connecticut would state that teachers just show up. After all of my best efforts in college, passing the required exams, and professional teacher program and portfolio, and the costs associated with all of it, to state that I just "show up" is completely ignorant and arrogant of the governor.

I put forth my best efforts to become a teacher, a professional in my field of study, and I put forth my best efforts to remain educated in my discipline through CEUs, knowledge of the newest classroom technologies and by practicing my language skills with authentic language speakers of different countries, including Spain, Chile, Argentina and here in the United States with family and friends. I am a dedicated teacher who cares about all of my students and puts their needs first. I volunteer for extracurricular clubs, including Spanish Honors Society and the Diversity Team, and I have planned and been the Lead Teacher on two school sponsored trips to Chile and Argentina with approximately 15 students. I used my vacation to go abroad with 15 students to enhance their learning from the classroom into the real world. I consider myself a

professional and adhere to a code of conduct and ethics that support my profession as a leader, mentor and facilitator. I take great pride in my profession and in the steps it took for me to become a teacher, and to remain a teacher and attain my Professional Certification. I have been educated by teachers who have had high standards, I've passed exams, portfolios and observations with high standards and graduated from a college with high standards and I, in turn, have high standards for all of my students. With my tenure has come an experience that I couldn't attain out of text books and my education alone. My best experiences have come by my daily motivation to teach my students and I measure my best achievements by those of my students. I am my hardest critic and I am a dedicated and diligent teacher.

I urge you to reject proposal SB24. I believe it is imperative to connect teacher licensing to teacher training and advanced coursework beyond a bachelor's degree in order to be responsive to the changing needs of the students. I also believe we need to fix tenure and dismissal by "requiring due process based on "just cause," which ensures that a neutral hearing officer can issue a binding and timely decision in a termination hearing."